A

REPLY

TO

MR. BURKE's TWO LETTERS,

ON THE

PROPOSALS FOR PEACE

WITH THE

REGICIDE DIRECTORY OF FRANCE.

BY

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A

REPLY, &c. &c.

PITY ſuch ſuperior talents, ſuch ſublime eloquence, and ſuch ardent energy, as flames in every page of Mr. Burke's late publication, ſhould be enliſted in the cauſe of deſpotiſm and bloodſhed. The greateſt ornaments of human nature, are ſometimes the moſt lamentable monuments of its infirmity; and thoſe, whoſe penetrating genius unravels the profoundeſt labyrinths of truth, are not unfrequently loſt upon its ſmootheſt ſurface. I read the works of this great maſter of compoſition with an admiration bordering upon enthuſiaſm, the grandeur of his ideas, the beauties of his imagery, rouſe every faculty of my ſoul; but they do not always carry conviction to my underſtanding. In the preſent letters, however, there is a diſplay of candour, which his zeal againſt Jacobiniſm (his indiſcriminate denomination of Reformers and Revolutioniſts of every deſcription) has hitherto

ſhrouded; his cenſures of the Engliſh Miniſtry and of the combined cabinets, prove how much better he is acquainted with the nature, conduct, and principles of courts, than with the nature, conduct, and principles of Republicaniſm.

In Owen's edition of theſe letters *, Mr. Burke declares, that he ſuppoſes "a peace with jaco-"binism, the ſubmiſſion to its laws, and the "adoption of its whole ſcheme, to be neceſſarily "connected." In Rivington's edition this paragraph is expunged. I do not from thence believe that he has altered his opinion; for his argument, throughout, evidently hinges upon that ſuppoſition. I ſhall paſs it unnoticed for the preſent, and ſpecifically anſwer it in the winding up of my argument.

The Great Diſpoſer of events has, in his unerring providence, ſorely bruiſed him. Misfortune ever claims a tear, and ſacred be the tributary drop that mingles with the grief of an afflicted father. The preſent face of Europe is awful; the inroads of deſolation, though great, are trivial to thoſe which are behind; "the "vacuity to be filled with public ſorrow, is vaſt "indeed." But, it is not for kings and nobles that I am concerned; my fears are awakened

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for

for the great body of the people, as valuable, and far more numerous, than the ſoft children of affluence. Yet the proſpect, while it demands a ſigh, invites a ſmile; through a dreary wilderneſs we ſhall travel to the land of promiſe, and journey through ruinous commotions to univerſal happineſs and liberty.

In a former pamphlet, I obſerved, that Mr. Burke's writings carried their antidote along with them. His invectives againſt French principles are ſo unwarrantably bitter, and in ſuch direct contradiction to known facts, that I will hazard the prophecy, that his labours are unrewarded by one convert; but the glowing picture he has drawn, of the falſehood, treachery, corruption, inconſiſtency, avarice, imbecility, ſtupidity, and cowardice of all the courts of Europe, and of the Engliſh cabinet in particular, cannot fail to multiply, and that greatly, the votaries of jacobiniſm. When the popular writers loaded them with but part of this guilty mountain, a cry of falſehood and miſrepreſentation was immediately raiſed; and proſecution, and perſecution, employed for the deſtruction of ſuch immeaſureable liars. But who will contradict Mr. Burke? What ſceptic will diſbelieve him? His accuſations are armed with ſcriptural authority,

authority, and not even Mr. Windham's Metaphyfics can quibble them away.

Far from lamenting * the change which is taking place in the popular difpofition, I rejoice at it. Britons were formerly free; the glorious exploits of our anceftors, prove that their affections moved in the orbit of liberty. At times they were depreffed by the overbearing infolence of tyrants; but as their defires were pointed right, they invariably returned to their original channel. But, "a change in the national fpi-"rit," and "the moft terrible of all revolu-"tions," was well nigh effected. The corruption of the cabinet, the open venality of the great, and the fyftematic apoftacy of the leaders, had tainted the morals of the people, who generally ape thofe whom they cannot equal. They faw virtue laughed out of countenance, honeft poverty defpifed, and religion fet at nought, by thofe whofe exalted ftations and fuperior talents rendered them the ftandards of national manners; they had travelled far in the aphelion of vice. Thus degenerate, a change in the national character could alone refcue them from the gulf of flavery, into which their felf-intereftednefs had almoft plunged them. Such a change is cer-

* Page 1.

tainly,

tainly, though flowly taking place, and fnatched from this ghaftly ruin, Britain will become a greater and freer nation than time has yet beheld her.

Corrupt as man is, I cannot think with Mr. Burke, that a ftate can be fo conftructed as to be capable of eternal duration. I think there is an analogy between it and the individuals of whom it is compofed. Morals appear to me to be entirely dependent upon phyfics. A commonwealth "is * an arbitrary production of the human mind." If then the mind, which is the primary caufe, is corrupt, that corruption muft be communicated to the effect, and hence the government will contain in itfelf the feeds of deftruction. Befides, imperfect beings cannot create a work of abfolute perfection, and nothing fhort of abfolute perfection has the capacity of lafting for ever. The caufe of the rife and decadence of nations is thus folved, and the different periods of their duration arifes from the various degrees of excellence of their refpective conftitutions. The extreme depravity of a conftitution likewife protracts its exiftence. A people, buried in fuperftition and ignorance, are torpid, and unconfcious of the rights and remedies with which the all-bountiful Creator

* Page 3.

has

has invefted them. If the propagation of this fuperftition be wifely provided for, ages may be requifite to rend the veil; but it will be rent. This the French nation has done, it has regenerated man. In other revolutions, the old governments have been infanted and invigorated, here, it has been utterly confumed, and a phœnix has arifen from its afhes. The true principles of reprefentation are now difcovered, and a few years will render France the wonder and admiration of the world.

It was not the vices of the king* which precipitated the ruin of its monarchy, it was the vices of the court and of the clergy, which had contaminated the people, and their pollution is the trumpet of deftruction to a government. Woe unto thofe rulers who attend not to the public morals, they are the prolific mother of all evils, and of every danger.

Mr. Burke invariably confounds the nation with the government, and confiders them as fynonimous and co-durable. No two ideas are more diftinct. The welfare of the nation is fometimes built upon the ruins of the government. Such has been the cafe in France. The miferies of the "Republic of Regicide †,"

* Page 6. † Page 7.

which

which he has marſhalled in funeral array, prove the immenſe force of a ſtate unſhackled by government and free to uſe all its native energies. As to the popular diſcontents he ſpeaks of, in whatever degree they exiſted, they were merely a diſſatisfaction with ſome particular individuals, not a diſguſt at the Republic. Light as the Engliſh character is, and ever was*, it is ſtability itſelf when compared with the weathercock frivolity of the old French character. But what a revolution has been effected there! The *petit maitre* is antiquated, and paints and patches baniſhed from the thoughts of the women;—Lycean gravity is ſtamped on every feature, and a race of apes are converted into a generation of philoſophers. If Jacobinical principles (and Mr. Burke admits they have made great inroads into Britain) are thus ſtable, and have this gravitating quality, if their votaries are "utterly incapable of amendment †." How is a fluctuation in the public mind to be expected? and without a fluctuation, he has but ſmall expectation of the tide of ſucceſs turning in our favour ‡.

He candidly acknowledges, that we muſt uſe extraordinary exertions ‖; that our ſituation is

* Page 9. † Page 67. ‡ Page 8. ‖ Page 9.

diffi-

difficult, never more ſo*; infinitely more unpromiſing than it was†, owing to the "diſhoneſt policy of the allies," and of "Great Britain among the foremoſt;" and that we are but at the beginning of our troubles. This is, however, giving the lie direct to the king, who, in his ſpeech from the throne, comforted us with the aſſurance, that we were in a very proſperous way. But at the beginning of our troubles? a hundred millions of money, and a hundred thouſand lives, are but the prologue to the tragedy Mr. Pitt is acting! There are five acts and an epilogue yet to come. I have heard him called the huſband of Britannia;—with more propriety might he be denominated her undertaker.

Mr. Burke ingenuouſly tells us‡, that we are reduced to that dreadful dilemma, that if we would ſave all, we muſt hazard all. France is reſolved to ſtake her exiſtence rather than retract; if, therefore, we would engage her upon equal terms, we muſt do the ſame. Horrid alternative! We muſt deſtroy, or be deſtroyed! But then the wealth and power of Great Britain have never been ſo conſiderable as at this perilous moment. "We are full even to a "plethory §." Alas, we are in the laſt ſtage of

* Page 18. † Page 10. ‡ Page 12. § Page 13.

a confumption! If inftead of enquiring of ftern ambition and unfeeling avarice, he would vifit the poor-houfes and examine the books of poor-rates; enter the cottage, and pafs through the lanes and alleys of cities; the tattered garments and wan vifages; the funk eyes and unemployed hands of millions, would convince him, that his ftatements are a dream, the effufions of a heated imagination.

Our continental connexions have embroiled us in perpetual wars; and yet, Mr. Burke would bind them clofer to us *. We need no foreign ally;—but for that crooked policy which feparates the intereft of the government from that of the nation; difarms the people, and deprives them of that weight in the political machine to which they are entitled, and which they ought to poffefs; the attack of united Europe would be as impotent againft us, as it has been againft France.

Our fympathy, which he fo highly praifes †, is cruelty; our tendernefs, barbarity. Not a difpute that we have not fomented, not a quarrel in which we have not taken a part; and as if our interference was not a fufficient fcourge to mortality, we have fubfidized, threatened, and

* Page 14. † Page 16.

intrigued, till Europe was embroiled from one end to the other. If this be refinement, happy ſavages who wander from field to foreſt, the ſweet humanities of your nature uncivilized into guilt.

But "public proſecutions are become little "leſs than ſchools of treaſon*." "How comes "it, that in all the ſtate proſecutions of magni- "tude, from the Revolution to within theſe two "or three years, the crown has ſcarcely ever "retired diſgraced and defeated from its "courts?" Becauſe no former adminiſtration inſtituted ſuch proſecutions as the preſent have done; when they ſet an example, they did not hold it culpable to follow it;—nine day trials were uninvented. They impregnated no mountains, therefore no mice were born to them. They were content to uſe the laws as they found them, and eſſayed not violently to ſtretch them beyond their tone; and yet found them ſufficient to protect the Commonwealth, without the aid of the two dying bequeſts of the laſt parliament.

The neceſſity which Mr. Burke ſuppoſes† for popular leaders, and the uncontrolled authority with which he clothes them, is the ſtrongeſt poſſible ſatire upon the exiſting government of

* Page 19 and 20. † Page 21.

Great

Great Britain. All men are endowed with reaſoning faculties, and to attend to the cultivation of them is the moſt important duty of rulers. I mean not to aſſert, that by any human means they can be all rendered equally wiſe; their different ſituations and circumſtances form an unſurmountable barrier to it; but they may be all ſufficiently improved to judge between right and wrong, juſtice and injuſtice, and to diſtinguiſh a wiſe man from a fool. This is all that is neceſſary, and it reduces the power of the leaders to the mere execution of the laws, and the deviſing ſuch improvements in them as their ſuperior ſtudy and knowledge may ſuggeſt. Beyond this, if their authority extend, it is an irrefragable proof that the goverment is radically bad, or that it is ſcandalouſly adminiſtered.

The war in which we are engaged, is "a war "of a peculiar nature*." It is not a war with an ambitious Court or an intriguing Cabinet;—it is a war with men conſcious of their dignity, and duly appreciating the value of liberty. Theirs is "an armed doctrine †." But who has armed it? Not themſelves;—they wiſhed for peace. The ſurrounding monarchs, confounding the deſtruction of the government with the deſtruction of the nation, jumped at what they

* Page 22. † Ibid.

deemed a favourable opportunity for pillage (for Mr. Burke admits that on the part of the allies it is a war of plunder*). Providentially, however, they miſcalculated—their greedineſs has been righteouſly puniſhed, and the deſpoilers are themſelves deſpoiled.

He next aſſerts†, that if the French Republic can at all exiſt, it will finally prevail. I ſhall not diſcuſs it now, it will furniſh matter for the concluſion.

I conſider the conduct of the Directory, ſo far as relates to the negociations for peace, to be manly, fair and honourable. Contrary to the courtly cuſtom of trailing out a negociation for months, and explaining and re-explaining till the whole of the original meaning is loſt; they explicitly declared what the terms were upon which they would, or indeed could conclude a peace. They ſpecifically ſtated upon what they would, and upon what they would not negociate.

Mr. Burke's argument, in pages 24 and 25, recoils upon himſelf; and the ſtigma he endeavours to caſt upon the French, fixes itſelf upon the Engliſh adminiſtration. While our armies fought under the ſtandard of victory, no ſound

* Page 143. † Page 23.

of

of peace was heard; bloody proſcriptions and maſſacres were alone talked of, and marching to Paris, and extermination, were the ſtanding orders of the day. But when the goddeſs unfurled her banner in the French camp, and the allies found it neceſſary to "change their front," and march in an inverſe direction; when the gigantic ſtrength and energy of the Republic ſhone with ſuch tranſcendent luſtre that the very moles beheld it; they began to throw out their "ogles, lures, and glances" for peace; and while they crouched to the enemy abroad, raved againſt them at home with all the bombaſtic rant of "mock heroic tragedy." Forced into the war, it was not unreaſonable for the French to require an indemnity; the conquered countries were united to the Republic by the unanimous voice of the people, and by the general will of their own inhabitants. It would have been a foul and indelible ſtain upon their character to have relinquiſhed them againſt their will, and trafficked them away by a Smithfield bargain. But even if they had been ſo inclined, neither the authority of the Directory or of the Councils, was competent to the renunciation. It muſt have been referred to the people. The declaration of Citizen Barthelemi to Mr. Wickham, was, therefore, nothing but a plain matter of fact relation.

But

But the French assert, that it is the war of government and not of the nation*. The people were cajoled into it;—their generous humanity was employed to dupe them into an approbation of a measure hostile to their real interests. The atrocities (and atrocities there were) committed by the ruling powers in France, were enormously exaggerated, and the trumpet of alarm sounded in every village, that a conspiracy existed in this kingdom, of which France was the inspiring soul, whose single object was to murder the king, the royal family, and the nobles; in a word, every one without distinction of sex or age who possessed the least share of worldly goods. To enforce the belief of it, the Habeas Corpus Act was suspended, and individuals of unsullied patriotism, distinguished talents, and unblemished characters, were torn from their families, and entombed, for nine months, in solitary dungeons. At length the evil day of reckoning came, when a series of independent juries declared the accusations utterly without foundation. The acquittal of an hitherto obscure shoemaker, forms a more memorable epoch in the English annals, than the discovery of the gunpowder plot, or the landing of William III. The eyes of the people were then opened, the delusion vanished, and ever since they have been clamorous for peace.

* Page 30.

With respect to the declaration of the Directory *, that " they will have no peace with their enemies, until they have reduced them to a state which will put them under an impossibility of pursuing their wretched projects." In what does it differ from the late lofty language of our now obsequious premier? " French promises " could not be depended upon, no reliance " could be placed on their treaties, their impo- " tence alone could allay his fears, and their " decrepitude was an indispensible preliminary " to pacification." But now, how are the proud looks humbled, and the mighty ones brought to shame! Oh, happy pen! that with such inimitable strokes can paint! Oh, envied imagination! that can so exquisitely anticipate the interviews between freedom and bondage, and foresee the titled plenipotentiaries of royalty prostrating themselves with Oriental reverence, and kissing the ground whereon the haughty citizen stands. Surely, for this, Lord Malmsbury deserves a dukedom.

From whatever quarter, and at whatever period, proposals for peace could have been made, the acknowledgement of the Republic follows as a matter of course. To heed a message from it, was virtually to acknowledge its authority.

* Page 32.

Why

Why Great Britain and the Allies, attended at the "factory of degradation" at Basle, is sufficiently obvious. They had caught a tartar, and justly concluding, that the longer they continued the war, the worse they should speed, were desirous of getting out of it by the only door that was open. The impenetrable stuff of which the Republicans were formed, received no impressions from prosperous, or adverse fortune. They were immutable, unchangeable. The war was a Trophonian cave, into which the monarchs had precipitately entered; they were now revolutionized by it, and the brazen notes of havock and extermination were melted into the warblings of peace and recognition.

It appears that Mr. Wickham's business was only to pump Citizen Barthelemi, "to sound "France, on her disposition towards a general "pacification; to know whether she would consent to send Ministers to a Congress, at such a "place as might be hereafter agreed upon; to "know whether they would communicate the "general grounds of a pacification, such as "France would be willing to propose as a foundation for a negociation for peace with his "Majesty and his allies; *but he had no authority "to enter into any negociation with Citizen Bar-"thelemi*

" *thelemi upon theſe ſubjects*." For what purpoſe was this application made? it was like a lover writing to his miſtreſs to know when ſhe will be pleaſed to receive his addreſſes in perſon. France, however, with a rather unmaidenly forwardneſs, though perfectly agreeable to that openneſs and candour which are the diſtinguiſhing characteriſtics of a Republic, where ſtate ſecrecy is unknown, began the courtſhip herſelf, by explicitly ſtating the terms upon which ſhe muſt be wooed. The ambiguity and vagueneſs of the queſtions put to her by Mr. Wickham, warranted her doubting the ſincerity of the pacific intentions of the Britiſh court; they were admirably calculated for delay, and rendering negociation endleſs, and gaining time to recruit the bankrupt treaſuries and exhauſted armies of the Allies.

As to their refuſing to treat with the Allies, otherwiſe than ſingly *, they entered the confederacy one by one, and the Directory thought it their intereſt that they ſhould quit it in the ſame manner. Mr. Burke's accuſations are very ill urged, on behalf of a power he repeatedly acknowledges to be waging a war of plunder: beſides, is not a belligerent nation juſtified in procuring for itſelf the moſt advanta-

* Page 40.

geous peace it can! The Directory did their duty. It was the best possible mode of negociation for the French, and the only objection urged against it is, that it was the worst for the English. Moral justice is universally the same: an author treating on this subject, should consider himself as the citizen of another state, he should disrobe himself of all national and party prejudices, and judge as faithfully for the one as he does for the other. At all events, their insisting upon this mode of negociation, no more implies insincerity in them, than our objecting to it implies insincerity in us.

My faculties are singularly dull, if in the declaration, which Mr. Burke quotes *, the Directory are not as clear and open as to what may not, as they are to what may be the subject of negociation. The conquered countries which are united to the Republic, they have no authority to resign; those which are not united to the Republic they can resign; these, therefore, may become the subjects of negociation.

The four following pages of Mr. Burke's pamphlet, are a mass of false facts and false principles. He surely never reviewed them

* Page 41 and 42.

after they were written, or he would not have given them to the world in their preſent undigeſted ſtate. The conquered countries were united to the Republic by their own conſent; Mr. Burke cannot be ignorant that both the Dutch and Belgians aſſiſted the French in their enterprize; the conſolidation was the effect of the popular will, which is the only lawful governor, and it is the popular will alone which can diſunite them. The only mode by which they could have been made objects of negociation, would have been by Mr. Wickham ſtating it as a preliminary, and requeſting the Directory to lay it before the councils, to be by them referred to the people. Their ſanction would have been a warrant to the Directory to negociate about them. The Republic can take its own laws into conſideration, and if it pleaſes, abrogate them. It was the Republic, and not the legiſlature, that ſwept away the conſtitution; the legiſlature is the creature of the conſtitution, and is in many reſpects "cooped and cabined in." It never pretended to omnipotence; that is the alone attribute of the people. But Mr. Burke has ſo jumbled them with the legiſlative and executive authorities, that it is frequently impoſſible to know which he ſpeaks of, unleſs we ſuppoſe him utterly ignorant of popular principles, which if he is, it very ill becomes him

to write againſt them. His relatives have either no antecedents, or an antecedent that converts them into nonſenſe.

The "manly note *," in anſwer to this, is in the ſame ſtrain of blunder; the conſolidation of the conquered countries was not effected by a law, but by the conſtitution, and with the repetition of this obſervation, I ſhall diſmiſs it.

Peace the noiſy tongues of clamorous faction, exclaiming againſt miniſterial pride and arrogance; ſee the lowly proceſſion bending their ſupple knees, and ſmitten on the one cheek, turning the other to the ſmiters. Behold this white-robed train of patient martyrs bearing their croſſes to Baſle, to Berlin, to Denmark, and laſtly, to Pariſian calvary; and licking their petitions into the faſhionable ſhape of every town they come to! O truely chriſtian ſaints! Meek unreſiſting lambs! "Bleſſed are the peace-makers, for they ſhall be called the children of God."

To the firſt obſervation of Mr. Burke's †, upon the official note, which he has extracted from the journal of the defenders of the country, I reply,—That the willingneſs expreſſed

* Page 45. † Page 53.

by

by the Directory to treat with persons of whom they entertain so bad an opinion, is a strong proof of the sincerity with which they profess to desire peace.

To the second—That both they and the Dutch, will undoubtedly exert their utmost energy to establish their marines upon as respectable footings as possible, and rear the plant of commerce, whose tender fibres withered under the inclement sky of ancient despotism. It is not to be concealed (for let the English nation know the full extent of the obligations they owe to administration) that they will succeed. The enlarged views, the vast comprehensions, the indefatigable endeavours of the Directory, will soon expand the acorn into an oak; unblighted by taxes and monopolies, it will spread its enormous arms, and overshadow the two hemispheres.

To the third—That this war is carried on against the interest and inclination of the majority of the people of England. Against their interest, because all, but the unwieldy rich, are starving. Against their inclination, as the dissatisfied clamours of every street and village proclaim. The success of the ministerial candidates, at the late elections, is no disproof of this,

this, for out of ſix millions, (much leſs than the number of adults in this iſland) not one twenty-fourth have the privilege of voting; and of thoſe, a vaſt majority are in ſome way dependent upon, or to expreſs myſelf more courteouſly, upon terms of friendſhip with the court and the ariſtocracy.

In the very next page* Mr. Burke admits, that the conduct of Miniſters juſtifies the ſuſpicions which the Directory entertains, "Whoever goes," ſays he, "to the directorial preſence under this paſſport, with this offenſive "comment and foul explanation, goes in the "avowed ſenſe of the court to which he is ſent; "as the inſtrument of a government, diſſociated "from the intereſts and wiſhes of the nation, "for the purpoſe of cheating the people of "France and the people of England. He goes "out the declared emiſſary of a faithleſs Mi-"niſtry. He has perfidy for his credentials. "He has national weakneſs for his full powers." If this be not ample ground for ſuſpicion, I do not know what ſuſpicion is.

But another, and a very powerful reaſon may be aſſigned for their doubts of the ſincerity of the Engliſh government. The war was in its

* Page 55.

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commencement, avowedly a war of extermination. The declaration of the 29th of October, 1793, a part of which Mr. Burke has inserted *, and which is entirely of a piece, terms Louis the 16th their lawful sovereign, and attributes the calamities which France experienced, "to "the ambition, perfidy, and violence of those "whose crimes have involved their own country "in misery, and disgraced all civilized nations." No formal renunciation has been made of sentiments thus formally avowed; on the contrary, throughout the whole negociation there has been a studied avoidance of recognizing the authority of the Republic, and it was not till the tide of victory had ebbed, that lofty language was abandoned.

But we are yet further the original promulgators of suspicion. A principal avowed ground of hostility, was a decree, which tended to a resolution to interfere in the domestic concerns of other countries, if applied to by the people, which was repealed to silence the royal cry that was raised against it. Yet this could not hush the suspicions of administration, who, in despite of their formal abjuration, persisted that they still retained the intention to intermeddle, whenever and wherever a favourable opportunity presented itself.

* Page 60.

But

But here is the maſter key which unlocks theſe otherwiſe impenetrable ſecrets, and juſtifies the ſuſpicions which the French harbour of miniſterial perfidy*. "*It is ſaid that there is a* "*ſecret in the Houſe of Commons. It is ſaid, that* "*miniſters act not according to the votes, but according* "*to the diſpoſitions of the majority. I hear that the* "*minority has long ſince ſpoken the general ſenſe of the* "*nation; and that to prevent thoſe who compoſe it* "*from having the open and avowed lead in that houſe,* "*or perhaps in both houſes, it was neceſſary to pre-* "*occupy their ground, and to take their propoſitions* "*out of their mouths, even with the hazard of being* "*afterwards reproved with a compliance which it was* "*foreſeen would be fruitleſs.*" Miniſters then have long acted in direct oppoſition to the ſenſe of the nation. Here is a palpable proof that the government and the people are diſtinct; that they may be, and actually are in oppoſition to one another; that it is the war of government and not of the people. Adminiſtration do not deſire peace, but *leſt oppoſition ſhould have the ſame lead within doors that they have long had without*, they think it convenient "to pre-occupy their "ground, &c." But mark the dilemma in which Mr. Burke has placed the Houſe of Commons:—either they ſpeak the opinion of their Conſtituents, which if they do, they repreſent but a very ſmall minority of the nation, and are

* Page 63.

the

the Houſe of Commons of only part of the people of England, which renders their inſtitution corrupt; or they do not ſpeak the opinion of their conſtituents, which makes them a corrupt body. But further—" *Miniſters act not according "to the vote, but according to the diſpoſitions of the "majority.*" The majority then vote againſt their conſciences, and are individually corrupt; and yet the only crime alledged againſt the "Jacobins" of England, is an endeavour to reform and cleanſe this Augean ſtable.

I come now to conſider * Mr. Burke's calculation of the numbers of "political citizens "of England. (This is the ſecond time he has uſed this Jacobinical appellation.) As I am not in poſſeſſion of the data upon which he makes it, I can only comment upon it as I find it: he excludes all thoſe who are in a ſtate of "menial dependence, or what is virtually ſuch," (a vague indefinite expreſſion) to the amount of two millions. Theſe form no part of the public. The number of political citizens he ſtates at four hundred thouſand, who "form the "public," and are the "natural repreſentatives "of the people; and on this body, more than "on the legal conſtituent, the artificial repre- "ſentation depends." Oh, for Mr. Windham's ſkill in metaphyſics to underſtand this! Of

* Page 66.

these, one-fifth, or eighty thousand, are "pure "Jacobins, incapable of any amendment." "I "do not know," adds he, "whether, if I aimed "at the total overthrow of a kingdom, I should "wish to be encumbered with a larger body of "partizans." But the remainder of the inhabitants of Great Britain are not so languid and inanimate as Mr. Burke supposes. A considerable portion of them are actually converted, and the remainder are in a fair way of being converted to the principles of "Jacobinism." What are the weapons with which the Jacobins have fought? How have they endeavoured to strengthen their party? Not by violence;—not by tumult;—not by inflammatory publications and discourses; but by cool reasonings, dispassionate arguments, and invitations to a sober research after truth. Undoubtedly there have been some who have held a contrary line of conduct, a few weak and sometimes wicked individuals; but they have never been countenanced by the great body. If their logic is "unsound and sophistical," why has not Mr. Burke, or some other royal writer, disproved them?

But the Jacobins† "all go in one direction, "they all bear one way, they all go to the substantial merits of their cause." This is negatively admitting, that it is not so with the sup-

* Page 71.

porters

porters of adminiſtration; they jar, they differ, they are an untempered compoſition of diſcordant ſubſtances—Satan is divided againſt Satan.

The inceſſant din for peace, which Mr. Burke ſo charitably attributes to a hatred of their country, ſprings from the direct contrary motive. Mourning over the calamities of an unparalleled war, ſorrowing for their depopulated ruined nation, they generouſly ſtrive to reſcue her from her impending and final doom. Aſk the diſconſolate widow, the deſerted orphan, the childleſs parent, the late affluent beggar, whether they are not philanthropiſts? Animated by this "wide extended love of all the human "race," venerating the land that gave them birth, they are active and indefatigable, and knowing that a well-informed people is alone a happy people, they labour to diſſeminate their principles, and conſolidate every individual into one pacific maſs. Hence their reſtleſs energy, and the ſucceſs which attends their exertions.

The quotation* of Sir Robert Walpole's conduct, merely ſerves to ſhew the impotence of Mr. Pitt, in chooſing a weak miniſter for his model, inſtead of a wiſe one; and the abominable venality and corruption of the then Houſe of Commons. It is rather mal-a-propos, con-

* Page 71.

 ſidering

fidering that the people are clamouring for a reform in parliament, and that the members of the prefent parliament vote againft their confciences *.

Mr. Burke emphatically tells us †, the prefent muft be a long war; and by way of apology for the further effufions of blood, adds, that from 1689 to 1713, there was not an interval of five years, in which we were not at war, or preparing for war. He might, I believe, have extended it, without much violence, to the greater part of Europe. But this, like moft of his other authorities, makes againft the caufe it is cited to fupport. It proves that bad and fanguinary principles prevailed fomewhere, or rather that they were epidemic; and the almoft inceffant hoftilities which have ever fince defolated Europe, and reduced ancient France to bankruptcy, and the remainder of the governments to the verge of bankruptcy, awfully proves that the fyftem is not changed for the better. The lamentable picture of the ftate of Britain, in William the Third's time, fo emphatically delineated by Mr. Burke, while it demonftrates how great things can be atchieved by an energetic majority, though clogged with domeftic feuds, an exhaufted treafury, tottering credit, and dry fountains of revenue, fadly tell us, that our

* Page 63. † Page 76.

boafted

boasted Constitution and Government are but theoretically good; that penury and distress have long lost their novelty, and that the fabric, beautiful upon paper, like the fair skin of a female viewed through a microscope, loses its loveliness when beheld in the mirror of experiment. But what were the mole-hills then removed to the Herculean labours, the massy mountains removed by regenerated France? Stupendous pyramid of human greatness! Daughter of Greece and Rome! but, oh, how far surpassing either parent!

But here I must correct one of those misstatements, which the impetuous haste of Mr. Burke sometimes overlooks*. Bank-paper was not "often" at a discount of twenty per cent. It was so only once; and the consequence was, that the Bank stopped payment. The manner in which its credit was restored, and the impossibility of restoring it from a similar situation now, I have shewn in another publication †.

Mr. Burke has stated ‡ the enormous increase of our foreign and inland commerce, since the Revolution; but he has not even hinted at their incalculable decrease during the present dis-

* Page 71.

† Rights of the People. Chapter on the State of England.

‡ Page 79.

astrous

aſtrous war. The deſerted work-ſhops of our manufacturing towns, and what is infinitely worſe, the unprecedented emigration of our mechanics, unable to ſupport themſelves any longer in this iron land; and who carry with them our manufactures and our improvements, proclaim its greatneſs with a voice not heard, but felt.

I am very far from thinking the multiplication of banking-houſes a pillar of proſperity. They are ſo many volcanoes, diſemboguing unſubſtantial paper lava, which has deluged the whole land, and which conſumes our Heſperian orchards of gold and ſilver fruit. The bankruptcy of one of them, directly or indirectly, involves the ruin of hundreds; and they have more than once ſhaken the throne of commerce to its centre. I know that paper currency is convenient in a ſtate; but then it ſhould be ſo fortified by national ſecurity, and the equilibrium of ſpecie, that the property of individuals, and the exiſtence of the Government, ſhould not be put in a ſtate of perpetual jeopardy.

But the ſituation of the country in William the Third's time, was extremely different from what it is now. The expence of the war, allowing for the different value of money, was com-

paratively ſmall. The dividends of bankrupt Europe were not paid out of the Engliſh capital. If public credit was then a ricketty infant, its infancy was its ſalvation; it was that alone which enabled it to ſurvive the ſevere ſickneſſes it endured; it was free from the decrepitude of age, and had not received the triple warning of diſſolution, the people ſtarving, the ſpecie in a conſumption, and the taxes in a dropſy.

Deadneſs and want of ſpirit were then univerſal in the nation *, now, all is animation and energy; the ſleepers awake faſt from their lethargic ſtupor, and the deluſive viſions of the night rapidly paſs away. Their averſion to a recommencement of hoſtilities was merely becauſe "they were tired out with taxes." Here, I admit, their ſituation was a type, though but a faint one, of ours; but the majority of the people, at preſent, are averſe to a continuation of the war from principle; the two million automatons are riſing into life; and, ere the vital ſpark is well breathed into their noſtrils, diſcover that men have rights, and that the French have merely exerciſed them; that their own anceſtors formerly exerciſed theirs, in part, or the Houſe of Hanover would have been yet mewed up in its electorate, highneſs unſprouted into majeſty.

* Page 84.

If

If the oppoſition which the people of England manifeſt to the war, ariſes from principle, the only way to engage them zealouſly in it, is to combat that principle and diſprove it. Declamation and invective ſerve but to ſtrengthen them in their opinion; for they are weapons no ſkilful arguer will uſe, when he can get any better. The ſublime flights of language with which Mr. Burke's pamphlet abounds, though they make forcible appeals to our paſſions, but feebly aſſail our reaſon. The long retroſpect of the cloſe of the laſt century, has been to little purpoſe. Magna Charta, the Habeas Corpus Act, the Bill of Rights, and other once beautiful pillars of the temple where Britiſh liberty dwelt, beſpeak the glorious atchievements of our anceſtors, louder and more durably than the trumpet. When war ſhall be read of with abhorrence, and the ruſt of time ſhall have eaten away the military trophies, the memory of the patriot ſhall be reſpected, and his aſhes moiſtened with a tear.

We now come to the opening of another ward in the political lock. The members of the Houſe of Commons have practiſed war experiments * at the expence of their conſtituents' blood and treaſure. Happy nation! to be bleſſed with ſuch philoſophical legiſlators! Experience

* Page 90.

muſt

muſt be bought, and though at a dear rate, we have at length purchaſed the aſſurance, that the Republic is invincible; and that a ſtate, entirely free, is miſtreſs of the world. Having acquired this knowledge of Republican power, they are next deſirous to gauge her pride, and aſcertain the preciſe height the thermometer of her haughtineſs ſtands at, and what effect the difference of degrees of longitude and latitude has upon it. Hence, the philoſophical miſſions to Baſle, Berlin and Paris.

Wearied with this ſublime flight through above 90 pages, Mr. Burke now falls aſleep*; and, in the enſuing 15 pages, delineates the fairy viſions, the variegated ſcenes of Lilliput and Brobdignag, the effuſions of his night thoughts. The certainly conſiſtent, and as certainly falſe pictures, he draws of the laws, manners, cuſtoms, and principles of the Republic, though amuſive for their invention, are as fallacious as the Arabian Nights Entertainments, or the Tales of the Genii.

I freely admit, that a war to preſerve us from the "impoſition of irreligion †, and to "preſerve our natural independence, pro- "perty, liberty, life, and honour, from certain "univerſal havock, is a war juſt, neceſſary,

* Aliquando dormitat homerus. † Page 93.

" manly, and pious." Our duty to God, to ourſelves, to poſterity, all demand a perſeverance in it, even to annihilation. Better not to give our children birth, than to ſurrender every thing that can render their lives honourable, uſeful, and happy.

But have the French endeavoured to impoſe this grievous yoke upon us? On the contrary, they have formally denied it. They have renounced all right, and all intention, of interfering in the domeſtic concerns of other nations, and merely contend for the reciprocal privilege of arranging their own affairs, uncontrouled by the arbitrary will of their neighbours. If I will not ſuffer a ſtranger to come into my houſe, it does not follow that I mean to turn him out of his. If I will not conform to his religion, I do not thereby declare an intention of preſſing him into mine; and yet, theſe are the concluſions which Mr. Burke draws as inevitable.

Much as I deprecate the idea of a conqueſt, I ſo entirely differ with Mr. Burke *, that I would rather ten thouſand times ſee my country a department of France, than a province of any other nation. Kind heaven forbid, that ever I ſhould behold the humane Suwarrow, ſtrutting

* Page 94.

the

the viceroy of the gentle Catherine, or the philanthropic Brunſwick of the faithful Frederic, or the Prince of Peace, with his retinue of friars, inquiſitors, and the other holy ingredients of an *auto da fe.* The Engliſh have hitherto been able to vindicate their own freedom, and, I truſt, the ſacred ſpark which illumined the breaſts of their anceſtors, has not mouldered with their aſhes; but, ſurviving time and death, has deſcended to their children, a more invaluable legacy than all the venerable bulwarks they upreared. With it, we could have built them ourſelves, without it, they will ſoon crumble into duſt.

Mr. Burke and Lord Camden* are not the firſt wiſe men who have been bewildered upon a plain. The French aboliſhed their code of juriſprudence, not that they might be without law, but that they might ſimplify their laws, and have ſuch as every body could underſtand. If they are without inns of court, it is becauſe they do not want them. Where every citizen is a lawyer, the law is not a diſtinct profeſſion.

If the viſionary baſes upon which Mr. Burke conſtructs the French Republic were real, I ſhould be as decided an enemy to it as himſelf, but they have no exiſtence, ſave in his own

* Page 95.

ardent imagination*. In the firſt place, they do not, nor ever did, lay it down as a fundamental principle—that all government, not being a democracy, is uſurpation; and that all kings, *as ſuch*, are uſurpers. They merely aſſert the ſupremacy of the people, that all power is from them, and that they are the only ſource of natural authority; hereby denying the divine right of kings, and that their majeſty is merely derivative; and if it be not ſo, the Houſe of Hanover are uſurpers, and the Britiſh nation traitors for ſubmitting to their yoke. If the family of Stuart did not derive their throne from the popular will, the people had no right to dethrone them; which if they had not, the acts of ſettlement are void, and the next heir of the family of Stuart is our rightful ſovereign. It was the people alone who gave the ſceptre to William III. for the Houſes of Lords and Commons, when ſeparated from the King, are not a parliament; conſequently their individual act cannot bind the nation.

Secondly—† Mr. Burke miſtakes a revolutionary government for a permanent one. Under a revolutionary government every thing is afloat, and the ruling powers are compelled to many acts of violence, which, in other circumſtances,

* Page 96. † Page 98.

they

they would abhor. Aſſailed by unnatural means, by open war, ſecret corruption, and domeſtic inſurrection; what wonder if unnatural efforts were requiſite to overcome them? And it is evident the people conſidered it in this light, or they would not ſo cheerfully have ſubmitted to them; for in all the revolutions and counter-revolutions, which have taken place, the ruin has invariably been aimed at unprincipled individuals, for the ſalvation of the Republic.

With reſpect to the third*—Had Mr. Burke deeply conſidered the ſubject, he would have held a far different language; it was the antichriſtianity of the popiſh religion that laid the foundation of the revolution. The conduct of the prieſts, evidently ſhewed that they conſidered it as a gainful trade, and for ages had ſyſtematically debauched the minds of their devotees; the climax of blaſphemy was at length reached, and the iniquities of the fathers were viſited upon the children. To the ſons of the Roman ſtrumpet we muſt trace the deſolation, and it requires not the eyes of Lynceus to diſcern, that the ſame polluted fountain will ſhortly overflow all the countries which the triple crown encircles. How far the proteſtant nations will

* Page 98.

be

be involved in the ruin, I ſhall not here enquire. If we calculate the corruption of the reformed (as they are called) clergy, and the conſequent corruption of the laity, we ſhall find an accurate ſolution. The tranſitions from anti-chriſtianity to deiſm, and from that to atheiſm, are natural, and account, in ſome degree, for the number of learned, in all ages, who have adopted the latter opinions.

But the atheiſtical decree of the Convention, by no means proves that the maſs of the people were atheiſts. At that time, it frequently paſſed the moſt important decrees with precipitation, and ſometimes as precipitately repealed them. They were not broke of the ſervile practice of following leaders; an eminent atheiſt could therefore give an atheiſtical colour to the whole. But it is not upon what they were, but upon what they are, that Mr. Burke ſhould have argued. They are not ſo now. I admit, that they do not treat religion with that awful reverence it deſerves; but the tide of popular opinion is flowing back, and will, muſt reach the high water-mark.

And does the venerable Brutus * "affright our nature?" And is the ſacred patriotiſm which

* Page 100.

inflamed his breaſt, impious and profane? Why, O ye hiſtorians, have ye waſted your midnight oil in tranſcribing for us heroiſm, we have neither the courage to imitate, or even the virtue to admire!

But, admitting that the zeal of ſome outſtrips their reaſon; it proves, that they carried virtue to exceſs, and while we pity their deluſion, are compelled to admire the energy which prompted to ſuch lofty actions. It proves, that all private regards were ſwallowed up in the public welfare, and that the guardian genius of Rome was the tutelary ſpirit of France.

I diſapprove ſtrongly* of their degradation of the marriage ſtate; but when the whole maſs of the people are rouſed into action, (and without it, the French revolution could not have been effected) temporary extremes muſt be expected; but the ebullitions of paſſion ſpeedily evaporate, and unſullied reaſon reſumes her golden ſway. Without wandering into philoſophical ſpeculations, to prove that chaſtity is the only bulwark of the marriage-bed, and, with it, of human happineſs; the creation of a ſofter ſex ſufficiently demonſtrates the union which ought to ſubſiſt between the two, and the im-

* Page 101.

meaſurable gulf that parts the deſire of mere brutal gratification, from the tender ſympathy, the diſintereſted affection, the holy efferveſcence which the fair idol of the heart inſpires, irrefragably proves, that as man cannot ſerve two gods, ſo neither can he love two women. Legal proſtitution had been a principal means of corrupting the national morals, and bringing religion into diſrepute. By legal proſtitution, I mean, the forcing the hand of a child, where the heart cannot follow. Policy and humanity might [I do not abſolutely ſay they did, and yet the numbers who greedily availed themſelves of the relief, ſtrongly imply that they did) require that this galling fetter ſhould be broken, and its bond ſlaves emancipated. I think, however, that a ſhort period ſhould have been limited, and that all perſons, who, within that time, did not take advantage of the permiſſion, ſhould have been precluded from its benefits. The offspring require the foſtering care of the parents who gave them birth, and if it were only for their ſakes, marriage ſhould be eternal. Nevertheleſs, the female condition ſhould be ameliorated; the ſlavery, to which even in Europe they are ſubjected, proves that the laws of all European ſtates, England among the reſt, are radically bad, and that the profeſſors of chriſtianity are ſtrangers to the ſpirit and practice of it.

I do

I do not give implicit credit to all the ſanguinary tales which Mr. Burke relates *; but if there have been ſome ſuch unnatural wretches, it proves no more againſt the French Revolution, than the cruelties of Nero do againſt royalty, or the enormities of Bonner againſt epiſcopacy; and further, it was the old government that nouriſhed thoſe monſters, and infuſed into them the execrable diſpoſition they have manifeſted under the new one. Let Damien declare the human ſpectacles it exhibited.

The "poliſhed vice," the "elegant, though "not blameleſs luxury," which Mr. Burke ſpeaks of † in ſuch courtly language, is to me more dreadful than all the maſſacres of the Septembrizers, or the barbarities of Robeſpierre. Let vice wear its natural robe of hideouſneſs and deformity, and it is a beacon for all mankind to ſhun; but when its crookedneſs is ſtraitened with pads and pillows, when its wrinkles are gloſſed over with paint and beauty-ſpots, ſhe is then a deceitful harlot who entraps the unwary, and whom the ſage himſelf can hardly ſhun; ſhe ſeduces the heedleſs youth, and aſſuming the appearance of virtue, points to the wide and flowery road of deſtruction.

As to ‡ war, it may and will be put an end to, it may and will be extirpated from the earth,

* Page 105. † Page 107. ‡ Page 109.

and the French Revolution is the firſt effectual ſtep towards its baniſhment. The French principles are of that bland homogeneous nature, that when harmonized by religion, they will digeſt not only all Europe, but the whole world, into one vaſt commonwealth. With many I expect to be ſet down as viſionary, as the antitype and ſucceſſor of Brothers, when I declare my firm belief; nay, more, my abſolute conviction, that the millennium is at hand, the reign of chriſtianity and of peace; but it muſt be nurſed in the cradle of univerſal war, the laurel crown muſt be rent away, before the brow can receive a crown of olive. Had Mr. Burke ſpent as much time in ſtudying the prophecies, as he has in vilifying the Jacobins, he would long ago have diſcovered that they are invincible.

The ardent energy which they have maniſeſted, and which have diſſevered them from all governments, not nations *, was ripened to its preſent perfection by the allies; they would not let them form a limited monarchy to their liking, and thereby forced them into republicaniſm.

I admit that a man, and it is the ſame with ſtates, has no right to erect what is a nuiſance to his neighbour; but if my neighbour forces

* Page 112.

me

me to erect the nuisance, I do not see upon what principle of justice he can compel me to pull it down again. But I cannot agree that age sanctifies it*; it is never too late to amend, and it is a maxim of the law of England, grounded on the rights of man†, (the second time Mr. Burke has used this expression) that "a bad custom ought to be abolished." Were it not for the spirit of innovation, the most invaluable blessings to countries and to individuals would be unenjoyed. We should be at this moment almost in a state of nature, poor wandering savages, blind followers of superstitious druids, the sublime truths of revelation, the unblemished morality of the gospel, the assured hope of eternal happiness, and the Calvary from whence we ascend into it, all unknown. Yet, druidical groves would remain unsanctified, and the doctrine of transmigration a fable; though, in our fanaticism against novelty, we would not bear to be told so.

Blot out, Oh, memory! the ungentlemanlike, the unmanly opprobriums with which Mr. Burke, throughout the whole of his book, and in no place more than in the page before me‡, has defiled his paper. Root out those poisonous night-shades from this Eden, where every blooming flower, every fragrant sweet, flourish in per-

* Page 115. † Page 113. ‡ Page 116.

 petual

petual ſpring. His language needs no foil, it wants no contraſt, to add a borrowed luſtre to its beauties. Oh, that he was always himſelf!

To make ſome amends, however, he immediately preſents us with a ſtriking picture of the price which the exiſting Governments of Europe ſet upon the lives and riches of their people *;—yet there ſhould be no innovation to raiſe their price. Theſe "poliſhed vices" are venerable with the ruſt of time, and, therefore, aſſert a claim to immortality. How ill does this accord with what he has before told us †. "The "blood of man ſhould never be ſhed but to re-"deem the blood of man. It is well ſhed for "our family, for our friends, for our God, for "our country, for our kind. The reſt is vanity, "the reſt is crime." Not a word about punctilios and catſkins.

With reſpect to Cade's caſe ‡, it is anſwered in a very few words. If Cade, and his "gang," had got poſſeſſion of London, and proclaimed themſelves Lord Mayor, Aldermen and Common Council, they would not have been them; but if the Livery had choſen them Lord Mayor, Aldermen and Common Council, they would have been them legally. The conſtituted (mark the expreſſion, whether it denotes uſurpation)

* Page 117. † Page 92. ‡ Page 119.

authorities

authorities in France, claim no inherent authority, they derive the whole of their power from popular delegation.

Of all the excentricities of this excentric performance, none is more ſingular than the definition of a body politic*. "The body politic "of France, exiſted in the majeſty of its throne, "in the dignity of its nobility, in the honour of "its gentry, in the ſanctity of its clergy, in the "reverence of its magiſtracy, in the weight and "conſideration due to its landed property in "the ſeveral bailiages, in the reſpect due to its "moveable ſubſtance repreſented by the corpo-"rations of the kingdom." It does not conſiſt in the Throne Nobility, &c. but in the *majeſty* of the throne, the *dignity* of the nobility, &c. The body politic is not a thing, but a quality; an adjective, not a ſubſtantive. The people form no part of it. But when the king deſcended from his majeſty, and the nobles from their dignity; when the clergy became unſanctified, the gentry diſhonourable and the magiſtracy wanting to their own reverence; when weight and conſideration were transferred from property to perſons, or rather to principles; and monopolizing ſelf-elected corporations were deemed public prejudices; when the quality was gone, what became of this body politic?

* Page 119. † Ibid.

It

It of courſe died too—no ſuch thing; the kingdom of France was turned out of France, and, with its locality, changed its part of ſpeech, the adjective became ſubſtantive. It is like the legal form by which if an action is brought upon a bond, &c. made in the Eaſt Indies, the declaration ſtates, that it was made at Bengal, in the Eaſt-Indies, in the city of Weſtminſter.

Mr. Burke, like the Guinea fowls he introduced in a former ſcene, is continually crying, that all that has been done in France was by a faction; and that if the ſame tragedies ſhould be repeated here, which God forbid! it would be by a faction. It muſt be by a faction of the whole nation, or Jacobiniſm muſt invigorate the muſcles of the body, as it does thoſe of the mind, to enable the few to lord it over the many.

Mr. Burke, with the moſt perfect candour, and with that heart-ſeizing eloquence ſo peculiarly his own, delineates* the ſufferings of the emigrants relying on royal promiſes. It is true, it is under a ſort of fiction of what his feelings would be were they Engliſh refugees; but the fiction faithfully repreſents the unparalleled treatment of the French, who have enliſted, or, perhaps, have been preſſed into our ſervice. No matter how great their demerits towards their

* Page 122.

own

own nation, that is not the queſtion; proſcribed already, their proſcription ought not to have been rendered irredeemable, and themſelves delivered up to certain death. The generals who excluded them from cartels deſerved hanging, and what do thoſe miniſters deſerve who ſuffer them to eſcape? Farewel Engliſh hoſpitality! It was of a piece with enliſting the fencibles upon the expreſs condition that they ſhould not be drafted, and drafting them immediately, to ſend the Emigrants upon expeditions of plunder, or from whence there was no retreat. The ſtain of Quiberon is indelible. The hunting the Maroons with blood-hounds is ſcarcely more ſo. Does not the hiſtory of courts afford abundant matter of invective? Jacobiniſm itſelf cannot monopolize it; and Mr. Burke, to do him juſtice, not unfrequently pays them a portion of their tribute.

Mr. Burke continues*, "I know that all I "have ſaid of the ſyſtematic unſociability of this "new-invented ſpecies of republic, and the im-"poſſibility of preſerving peace, is anſwered by "aſſerting, that the ſcheme of manners, morals, "and even of maxims and principles of ſtate, is "of no weight in a queſtion of peace or war be-"tween communities." This anſwer he will not admit, I ſhall, therefore, conteſt the point

* Page 125.

with

with him. It is not true, as he has afferted*, that Europe is one great ftate, differing merely in territorial regulations, but having fundamentally the fame laws and the fame religion. If, by the word " fundamental," he means derived from the fame origin, he is ftrictly correct; the religions are chriftian, and the conftitutions feudal. But the different edifices which have been built upon thefe foundations, differ fo totally, that it requires a learned and laborious refearch to difcover their original unity; for not only the deductions, but the principles themfelves, are fo totally changed, that the laws, manners, conftitutions and religions of the different ftates, many of them, at leaft, bear not the leaft refemblance to each other. In what, I afk, does the Church of England refemble that of Rome? or its morals thofe of Italy or Spain? or its conftitution that of Portugal or the Germanic States? The fprings of action, the ruling paffions all differ; how then are they fundamentally the fame? This is a corroboration of the Algerine argument. It is the firft time that I have heard Algiers called a Republic †. I prefume that Republic is the general denomination of all governments indefcribeably bad; if fo, we may call the Popedom the the Republic of St. Peter.

* Page 110. † Page 127.

When our anceſtors * repoſed, in what is called the executive government, the power of peace and war, they delegated a truſt, and did not confer an abſolute authority. The burden of it was to be borne by them, their blood and treaſure was the price to be paid for it; they certainly, therefore, did not, could not intend to renounce for themſelves and their unborn poſterity, (and if they did, the renunciation is void;) the privilege of deciding upon the propriety or impropriety of ſuch meaſures. So far from it, that they empowered the Houſe of Commons to withhold the ſupplies, by way of counterpoiſe to this exorbitant prerogative.

The people are competent to judge. Miniſters ſhould fairly ſtate the whole caſe to them, they have then done their duty; and, be the reſult what it may, they are blameleſs. Although ſeated upon a higher eminence, yet in moſt, if not in all wars,—indubitably in this, the people know enough to form an accurate eſtimate of the propriety of commencing and continuing hoſtilities. If they do not, it muſt ariſe from the criminal concealment, or miſrepreſentation of Miniſters, and if they are incapable of judging when the whole is before them, it is a ſufficient demonſtration of the badneſs of the go-

* Page 131.

vernment, which, inſtead of enlarging their talents, and cultivating their underſtandings, breeds them up in ignorance and ſtupid torpor. The laws, and of courſe the adminiſtration of the laws, are in this ſenſe, the parent of the ſtate; their care ſhould be ever on the whole, and on every individual. Politics is the buſi-neſs of every man; it is, therefore, as much the duty of government to render every citizen politically wiſe, as it is the duty of parents to render their children religiouſly ſo, and ſkilful in the calling by which they are to get their bread.

I agree, that it is wiſe to conceal parts of a public proceeding, but that the original whole ought to be made public. When the people have approved of a meaſure, they give admi-niſtration credit for the means of carrying it into execution, and ſhould not call for the deve-lopement of a particular plan, while it is pending, leſt the enemy ſhould be enabled to provide againſt it; but as ſoon as it is completed, they have a right to a diſtinct and ſpecific detail. Much, however, depends upon the honeſty and goodneſs of the Miniſters characters; we can truſt one man with our life, we cannot truſt another with a ſkain of thread, even while we ſee him and hold him.

Mr.

Mr. Burke concludes his firſt letter with a glowing panegyric upon miniſtry, and which ſome perſons, eſpecially when they recollect the epithets he formerly laviſhed upon them, might be tempted to conſider as ironical. Without enquiring into the cauſes of this extraordinary mutation of ſentiments, I will give him credit for his ſincerity, and conclude my ſtrictures upon his firſt letter with obſerving, that he exerciſes the ſame natural right which the Jacobins do, and for which he condemns them to temporal, and it ſhould ſeem to eternal perdition. "To exert reaſon is not to revolt againſt autho-"rity, reaſon and authority do not move in the "ſame parallel*." Let then, this venerable ſtateſman deal fairly with us, and inſtead of denouncing us for avowing and defending our principles, confute them.

Under the old government, France was but a limb of the body politic of Europe. Under the new government, ſhe is a complete body of herſelf, greater and more powerful than the reſt of Europe. This war, therefore, differs from all preceding wars, and the preſent peace will materially change the face of chriſtendom. We have had too palpable proofs of Pruſſian and Auſtrian diſintereſtedneſs to give much credit to their declaration†;

* Page 138. † Page 142.

and Mr. Burke acknowledges, that their practice has not correſponded with it; and the proclamations of Brunſwick and Cobourg, equally evidence their inſincerity and inhumanity. Theſe "firſt benefactors of mankind" have, however, found their error; (a new philoſopher has diſcovered that crimes are but miſtakes) one of them is now the ally and faithful friend of theſe anarchiſts and deſolaters, and the other continues hoſtilities, not from choice, but neceſſity; as the ſuits he has preferred for peace ſhew.

I now come to the moſt important part of Mr. Burke's pamphlet*. "It is not France, "extending a foreign empire over other na-"tions, it is a ſect aiming at univerſal empire, "and beginning with France. The leaders of "that ſect ſecured the *centre of Europe*, and "that ſecured, they knew that whatever might "be the event of battles and ſieges, their "*cauſe* was victorious." A ſect cannot attain univerſal empire by force of arms, it muſt uſe gentler means, and apply to the paſſions and underſtandings of mankind; it muſt hold out to them advantages they do not enjoy, and demonſtrate how they are to be obtained. People will ſeldom let go a certainty for an uncertainty, they generally ſquare their actions by the old

* Page 134.

proverb,

proverb, " a bird in the hand is worth two in the " bufh." They are not fo inordinately fond of fpeculation as to ftamp the die for their all; a mere appeal to the paffions would therefore procure them but few converts. An application to the underftanding muft be cool, difpaffionate, and built upon a rock. No man is fo ftupid, but he can tell whether he is happy and comfortable; if he is not, a remedy muft be pointed out, and an affurance given that the exchange will not be for the worfe; he muft be clearly fhewn how his felicity may be increafed, the expence at which the amelioration can be purchafed, and what will be the clear gain upon the improvement.

Political writers have long prognofticated the downfall of all the ftates of Europe. France, under the old government, had made greater proportionable exertions, than any other ftate, and therefore outftript her compeers in the race to the goal of bankruptcy and ruin. Their fuperior mifery firft awakened their reflection, and forcibly fuggefted the neceffity of reform. In a former publication I afferted, and I here repeat it, that at the beginning of the ftruggle, the popular leaders had no idea of revolution; that their object was a limitted monarchy; and that the irrefolution and inconftancy of Lewis the

the 16th, and the interference of the ſurrounding potentates, prefaced with the royal proclamation of the tender-hearted Duke of Brunſwick, were the foundation upon which their preſent ſtupendous fabric has been erected. The road which they have travelled was unbeaten, no human foot had trod it, or mortal imagination conceived it; they could not draw the plan of an edifice, whoſe ſtructure they were unable to comprehend, and the boldeſt adventurer dared not to have contemplated a total regeneration of human nature. It aroſe out of events. They had, indeed, the example of America before them; but America had only changed her government; her hoſpitable manners and morals remained. But here, manners and morals were to be as completely revolutionized as the body politic itſelf. Looking to the reſtoration of their own country, her patriots began the glorious ſtruggle, bearing the conſecrated banner of truth and reaſon; the people enliſted under them in multitudes, and they ſoon ſpoke the language of a united nation. The throne yet ſtood, but the endeavours to deform it with the ſnakes of ancient deſpotiſm, opened a gulf into which it has eternally ſunk. The pillars of the globe are not more durable than the Republic of France.

The

The other governments, however, though beaten, were not diſtanced; they were all within ſight of the winning poſt of bankruptcy when France reached it. Oppreſſion hung heavily upon the people, and awakened, and inſtructed by the example of France, they were ſeized with the ſame generous emulation of diſtinguiſhing themſelves in the annals of freedom, and of ſnatching their countries from the precipice on whoſe brink they ſtood. They admired the French revolution, but did not, as Mr. Burke aſſerts, approve of the conduct of its leaders in the lump, or juſtify the enormities they committed, but ſtill they wiſhed it to be finally triumphant, well aſſured that any price would be a cheap purchaſe of the bleſſings it would beſtow upon themſelves and their lateſt poſterity.

Their ſectaries in other countries acted not in confederation with them; they approved of their principles, and were deſirous of procuring for themſelves that ſhare, which in every government the democracy ought to poſſeſs. In England, their demand is univerſal ſuffrage and annual parliaments; nor have all the trials for treaſon and ſedition, which have ſo abundantly filled the coffers of the crown lawyers, been able to prove that their aim is carried further. There

may,

may, indeed, be an inſtance or two of the con-viction of a drunkard or a ſpy, for ſome groſs indecency of expreſſion, which has been always reprobated by the popular ſocieties, as inimical to the cauſe in which they are embarked; it therefore proves nothing againſt them.

Mr. Burke calls it a civil war*. Let us now enquire, (it will not be a digreſſion) how the Jacobins of England, as they are ſtyled, have carried it on. They have not armed the people, or invited them to take up arms; on the contrary, they have always abjured ſuch a mode of proceeding. They have not endeavoured to inflame party heats, or weaken it, by ſplitting it into factions. On the contrary, both by precept and example, they have endeavoured to ſoften all animoſities, and attune all jarring diſpoſitions into a full concert of harmony. They have held no private meetings, all their tranſactions are public, and whoever chuſes may know them. They reaſon with their countrymen, and "to exert reaſon is not to rebel againſt authority." To perſecute men, who ſyſtematically purſue ſuch a peaceable line of conduct, is the moſt effectual method to propagate their doctrines. Individuals may be hurt by it; but

* Page 144.

their

their injury is always more than compenſated by the benefit which accrues to the cauſe.

Diſmiſſing this novel mode of waging "civil" war, I now proceed* to the lamentable imbecillity and infatuation which he tells us, like an epidemic diſorder, pervades all the cabinets of Europe. And not only imbecillity and infatuation, but treachery and robbery. The ſcriptural order has been reverſed, and the legion of Devils have gone out of the ſwine and entered into the men. Had any but Mr. Burke convicted the monarchy of Europe of lunacy and felony, the Attorney General, with all the indignant majeſty of a royal tyger, would have ſprung upon him and rent him in pieces. The Philippics of Demoſthenes and Cicero dwindle into Lilliputians, when contraſted with this ſtupendous Emperor of Brobdignag. It is incapable of a ſingle addition. Malice and envy cannot throw on it an additional light, or caſt a darker ſhade. I ſhall only add further, that in this age of miracles it is not one of the leaſt, that Mr. Burke ſhould be the enthuſiaſtic advocate of kings, at the very moment in which he declares†, that they have not ſenſe enough to keep from falling into the fire, or honeſty to ab-

* Page 146. † Page 164.

ſtain from pilfering their neighbours goods when his houſe is in flames.

To require the French to cede their conqueſts, without offering an equivalent, would be a mockery, and we have no equivalent to offer. They aim not at tranſmarine territories. One province of Flanders is of more value to them than all they have loſt in either Indies, and the only inducement they had to require the ceſſion of Hiſpaniola, was to enable them to attack us the more effectually in a vulnerable quarter. They have found, that their true policy is to have a cloſe compact ſtate, and not one which, like a long-legged ſpider, has a claw in every quarter of the globe.

A peace with jacobin France would certainly differ materially from all former pacifications*. For ages it has been the rival of England. Whatſoever alterations were made in its government, manners, and morals; change what would, its hatred to England was unchangeable. The two nations ſyſtematically worried one another, till wearied and exhauſted, they were compelled to a temporary ceſſation of hoſtilities, which they called making peace, but which, in effect, was nothing more than taking breath between the

* Page 158.

rounds,

rounds, and preparing for a more extenſive deſolation of the human ſpecies. Regenerated France has, for object, not the corrupt gratification of the lordly few, but the ſubſtantial happineſs of all. No peaſant ſo poor as to be overlooked by her parental eye. Peace, eternal peace, is therefore her motto; and the zeal ſhe has diſplayed in the propagation of her principles, ariſes from the philanthropic regard a good man feels to conduct his wandering brethren to the road which he has diſcovered leads to their real welfare.

Mr. Burke *, in more than the preſent inſtance, confounds popery with chriſtianity, and concludes, that becauſe they were deſirous of deſtroying the former, they were of courſe hoſtile to the latter. He muſt know the immeaſurable expanſe, the irreconcileable difference that parts them;—that when the Pope enters in at one door, Jeſus goes out at the other.

I know that every doctrine upon which men can warm, whether of religion or politics, is the ſubject of propagation. The mode of propagation conſtitutes the difference. Mahometaniſm and Popery were propagated with the ſword. The effects prove the badneſs of the cauſes. Chriſtianity was propagated with meekneſs, and yet, with unexampled enthuſiaſm; and, thanks be

* Page 160.

to God, it does not want its apoſtles now, though out of the pale of the eſtabliſhment. No wilderneſs ſo barren but a caſual myrtle will bloſſom in it. But it is among the Methodiſts and Diſſenters that we muſt look for the well cultivated garden of flowers. I admit, that the violent tempers of ſome men prompted them to violent meaſures; but, chriſtianity excepted, I know nothing which, in any age, has been preached with ſo much zeal, kindneſs, and long ſuffering, as the principles of pure democracy.

The diviſion of the French Revolutioniſts into philoſophers and politicians *, is ingenious, but fanciful. Mr. Burke has not dived ſo deeply into the primary cauſes of the Revolution, as he has into its remote effects.

If the political ſpeculators of France were twenty to one more numerous than the political ſpeculators of England †, they muſt amount to eight millions; nearly the whole number of adult men, "and there were few of this deſcrip- "tion who did not emulouſly ſet forward the "Revolution." This completely diſproves the aſſertion, that it was effected "by a ſect aiming "at univerſal dominion, and beginning with the "conqueſt of France ‡." This proves that the French were not corrupted, but were all

* Page 160. † Page 164. ‡ Page 144.

corruptors;

corruptors; all "philosophers and politicians." Mr. Burke here refutes almost all that he has before contended for.

The crookedness of the French politics had long portended the destruction of the Government *; it was hastening to the tomb by a natural decay. The seeds of the Revolution were sown a long time before they sprung up. We cannot trace them back to their first bursting of the blade, but, certainly, the generation of Louis XV. were not aware of the grand effects they would so speedily produce. America paved their way, and shewed them how to be free. The interference of Louis accelerated the catastrophe, and was the immediate cause of it. The connexion it established between the two countries organized the dissatisfied, and roused the energy of the people. But I have elsewhere stated my sentiments upon this point more elaborately.

The observations of the diplomatic politicians, or in other words, of the whole country †, were strong and pertinent; but not altogether pertinent for Mr. Burke to recapitulate. He has before ‡ described the weakness and wickedness of the reigning sovereigns of Europe, and he now recites objections which go to the de-

* Page 164. † Page 168. ‡ Page 146.

struction

ſtruction of monarchy itſelf. The fluctuation of the ſupreme authority is an unſurmountable barrier to the ſtability of a ſtate. Inſtead of the eternal vigour of manhood, it is now a puling infant, now a tottering dotard; at one time a bold haughty hero, at another, a mean ſpirited abject monk. The force of the contraſt between it and a republic, ſhould have induced him to expunge this and the three following pages; they contain ſtronger arguments in favour of univerſal revolution, than any book I ever met with.

Mr. Burke has reared a ſtupendous pillar of the deformities of modern Europe*. Its baſe is the folly and depravity of the preſent ſovereigns, its ſhaft is the inherent badneſs of monarchy itſelf; and he now puts on the capital, the inadequacy of their conſtitutions to the grandeur and proſperity of the people. They aim at no one end—all is afloat, all depends on chance, or the character and diſpoſition of the Sovereign and his Miniſters. There is no proviſion made for the purity of religion, the preſervation of liberty, the improvement of agriculture or commerce. All is at ſea without a rudder or compaſs. No wonder they are without coheſion; and of theſe anarchical governments, England is the moſt chaotic †. Bette

* Page 175, &c. † Page 176.

be without government than ſuch governments as Mr. Burke deſcribes. Without adding any eulogium of my own, upon that of the French, I compliment it ſufficiently by ſtyling it with him, the reverſe of every other.

Mr. Burke winds up the whole of theſe elaborate letters, with the declaration *, that "the "new ſyſtem in France cannot be rendered ſafe "by any art, *that it muſt be deſtroyed, or it will de-"ſtroy all Europe.*" Admit the propoſition, and what does it prove? That all the governments of Europe ought to be deſtroyed. If French principles are better calculated to ſecure the happineſs of the people than any others, they will, and ought to be univerſal; if they are not, they will periſh of themſelves. They court enquiry, which is a ſtrong argument that they will bear it. A good cauſe never ſuffers by being written or ſpoken againſt, on the contrary, it acquires. New ideas may be gained, and improvements ſuggeſted by the diſcuſſion. When the arguments on both ſides are before the public, there is little danger of their judging amiſs. It is their intereſt to judge right.

Whatever may be the iſſue of theſe political ſpeculations, Engliſhmen are much indebted to this venerable ſtateſman. He firſt provoked the

* Page 181.

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difcuffion, he ftands aloof from both parties, and darts his thunderbolts upon each. If he terrifies the people from Jacobinifm, he will equally difguft them with Monarchy, and the whole of our triple Conftitution. If the former be not right, he demonftrates that the latter is wrong, and that the political loadftone is yet unfound. There is yet another road to be travelled, and another mine to be explored, and the calls for popular energy and difcuffion are redoubled. Whatever is effential to human happinefs, can and will be difcovered—But not by the fupine. Every faculty muft be awakened, every power called into action; mere felf exertion is not fufficient, every man muft effay to roufe and to infpirit his neighbour. Let us not deceive ourfelves. We live not in a world of reft; he lives moft ufefully who labours moft indefatigably.

FINIS.